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Consumer Services and How You Benefit

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOKLET:

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CSRS ... COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH SERVICE	7
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FCS FARMER COOPERATIVE SERVICE	9
FmHA .. FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION	10
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FAS FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE	11
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CONSUMER SERVICE? CONSUMER BENEFIT? WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Consumer Service:

A consumer service is a direct aid you can get from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or one of its agencies. For example, a consumer service might be information on nutrition in a publication from the Agricultural Research Service; or it might be food stamps from the Food and Nutrition Service; or it might be a loan from the Farmers Home Administration to repair your home in a rural community.

Consumer Benefit:

A consumer benefit is a benefit you get as a result of a direct service from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to someone else. For example, a consumer benefit might be more reliable food quality as a result of grading by the Agricultural Marketing Service in a processing plant; or research on trees by the Forest Service provides more lumber at a reduced cost to affect the price of your home; or the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's enforcement of regulations regarding the commercial handling of pets means healthier pets for you.

NOTE: Many of the consumer services and benefits mentioned in this booklet are provided by the local offices of governmental and educational centers in your community. The U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., provides these local units with administrative and technical support.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Consumer Services:

Whether you're a beginner or an old hand at food buying, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) can help you. It provides information in pamphlets, exhibits, films, slide sets, and fact sheets. Some are in Spanish; others are for consumers with modest incomes. (1)*

Wonder whether to buy canned whole tomatoes for that casserole? Or, will regular tomatoes do? An AMS pamphlet gives the answer. AMS tells you the meaning of food grades. Because many foods are packed and priced according to the U.S. grade standards, even if the grade doesn't appear on the label, you can compare prices—with knowledge about the grades—and buy the exact quality you need. Canned whole tomatoes, for example, are top grade; they have a bright red color and look better than lower grades. (2)

Before you seed a lawn or plant a vegetable garden, check the labels on the seed packages. AMS sees to it that agricultural, lawn, and vegetable seeds are truthfully labeled and advertised. (3)

Consumer Benefits:

When you shop in food stores, you find an abundant and varied supply of food. . .the result of an orderly flow through regular marketing channels. AMS, with its market news reporting services, grading programs, and marketing order systems, helps get this food to you consumers—when, where, and in the amounts you want. Market gluts and shortages, which could mean waste and higher prices for consumers, are less likely. (4)

What happens to food on its way to you? Food packers, processors, wholesalers, or retailers may use AMS grading programs to certify food quality. That way, when a chain store buyer on the east coast orders U.S. No. 1 potatoes, both he and the seller know they are talking about the same product. People engaged in buying and selling wholesale lots of food may use the market news reports provided by AMS to help decide the best place and time to buy or sell food products. Market news reports reveal the average selling prices of raw food products in producing areas and on wholesale markets. Hence, everyone has an equal chance to learn the "going rate." AMS also helps

provide an even flow of agricultural products by helping farmers get equitable shipping services and rates. A warehouse examination program provides for safe warehouse storage of many consumer-destined foods and fibers. (5)

How do those new agricultural products reach your stores? Research and promotion sponsored in part by AMS help the products get there. (6)

Fresh produce moves from the field to your supermarket shelf in hours. Consequently, fresh lettuce, peaches, and other perishable products travel thousands of miles to you. Speedy delivery is, in part, a result of AMS work. AMS enforces sales contracts in marketing perishable produce and helps settle contract disputes so food can move on to your store. (7)

As you eat that juicy pear, visualize the cost of getting it from tree to you. What might have been the cost, were it shipped in poor shape, overripe, shriveled, or damaged? Just as much or more. AMS helps keep supplies of regulated fruits and vegetables at an even keel—sometimes by keeping low-quality produce off the market. This is one way marketing orders help even out the ups and downs of supply and avert wild price swings. Marketing orders help producers stay in business and provide consumers dependable supplies of desirable sizes and quality of fruits, vegetables, and such specialty crops as nuts and dates. (8)

Milk shortages hurt both consumers and dairymen. Market gluts—with low prices—can be so costly as to force dairy farmers to sell cows for meat. Milk marketing orders administered by AMS help prevent this and insure a steady and dependable supply of good fresh milk in your supermarket. (9)

Plow under a crop of onions because production costs are higher than the returns? It can happen! To help prevent this, AMS provides food marketing assistance to encourage consumption of foods currently most abundant, easing the demand for foods in short supply. Promotional assistance is provided when supplies hamper farmers seeking a fair market. An end result is more food for you—the consumer. (10)

* Numbers in parenthesis refer to subject matter listings throughout this booklet. See "Guide to Consumer Services and Benefits . . ." on Page 15.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Consumer Services:

You can get information about gardening, home canning and freezing of fruits and vegetables, budgeting, landscaping, home building, and other subjects from Agricultural Research Service (ARS) publications. Millions of copies are distributed through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. (11)

For a listing of current ARS publications see *Popular Publications for the Farmer, Suburbanite, Homemaker, and Consumer, List #5*, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Also, 148 ARS publications are listed in the *List of Publications Available for Distribution by Members of Congress, Congressional List #1*. Publications under the headings, "Canning-Freezing-Storing-Cooking, Fruits and Nuts, Home Management, and Flowers, Shrubs and Trees," may be especially helpful to you. ARS family meal publications help you buy, prepare, and store eggs, vegetables, poultry, cheese, beef and veal, lamb, fruits, milk, cereals and pasta, pork, and nuts. (12)

What kinds of food—and how much—should you eat each day? Ask for the ARS bulletin, *Family Fare: A Guide to Good Nutrition*. It helps you plan nutritious meals and prepare food properly. (13)

Consumer Benefits:

Your food is more nutritious, tastier, and appetizing as a result of ARS plant breeding research. Example: Fresh market potatoes are being improved. New lines are low in total glycoalkaloids, a substance that can impart a slightly bitter flavor in fresh potatoes. (14)

Other upgraded fresh food products now available at your local grocery store include:

- A redder watermelon with a better texture.
- A darker green spinach with excellent leaf texture.
- Larger, more flavorful blueberries.
- Lettuce more firm than the standard variety even under relatively warm temperatures—making it especially suitable for hot-weather sandwiches and salads. (15)

A new lentil variety, "Teoka," has 17 percent more protein than standard commercial varieties. It has a large seed that is more uniform in size and color. (16)

Tangelos taste better than before. Nova, a new variety, has been released to growers. It has a higher sugar content and tastes sweeter than most other commercial varieties. (17)

You find more plants for home beautification and a greater variety of food than in the past. ARS plant explorers bring about 9,000 new plants per year into the United States and test their crop potential. Recent winners include large-fruit persimmons, the pistachio (a new industry for California) and the Chinese gooseberry. (18)

A new variety of dates—the Medjool—is available. From Morocco, it is 2½ times larger than ordinary varieties and is moist, tender, and most flavorful. It has won acceptance by growers and is on the market in California. (19)

ARS boosts your bounty of food. Examples follow: (20)

- Frozen orange juice concentrate provides a delicious, convenient, year-round source of vitamin C for millions of consumers. It also brings in an estimated quarter of a billion dollars a year at the marketplace—more than twice the value of the entire citrus crop 30 years ago. (21)

- Dehydrofreezing combines the economy of dehydration with the flavor-holding advantages of freezing. ARS scientists removed half the water from fruits and vegetables, then froze them. In this way, large volumes of fruit and vegetables are processed for manufacturing. Examples are the apple slices in baked pies and the vegetables in canned soups and stews. Shipping and storage costs—both factors in your grocery bills—are reduced. (22)

- Soon after vitamin B-12 was discovered, ARS researchers pinpointed it as a critical factor in the diets of poultry. Scientists learned how to produce large quantities of the vitamin through fermentation. Soybean meal and the B-12 supplement became the basis for the modern broiler industry. Hence, a nutritious, moderately priced food item became available to you. (23)

- San Francisco sourdough French bread may make its way into ovens all over the world. For more than 100 years, the bread could be made only in the San Francisco area because the cultures that provided the unique texture and flavor were a mystery. Recently, agricultural scientists isolated the yeast and bacteria in these cultures. As a result, the sourdough process was simplified by improving the way batches of dough were inoculated. The development of commercial cultures, which can be packaged and distributed like baker's yeast, came next. This means San Francisco-type sourdough bread is available anywhere bakers want to bake it. (24)

● Some new ARS developments cut the volume of waste material created by processing, thus reducing environmental pollution. One example is Orange-HO, a deliciously tangy orange drink. More of the whole orange is used in producing this beverage than in regular orange juice. Most of what's left of waste becomes dehydrated animal feed. Less than half of the orange is used in ordinary orange juice; Orange-HO uses almost 90 percent. Made by grinding the oranges into a homogenized puree, it is strongly flavored and must be diluted and sweetened. Other fruit purees or juices may be added to the whole orange puree to create additional drinks. (25)

● ARS helps farmers produce more meat—especially your hamburgers and steaks. This involves animal breeding, feeding, and management research; improving pasture, range, and forage; and increasing the protein content and quality of feed grains. (26)

● One ARS study shows young bulls usually produce 25 to 40 percent more lean meat than steers on the same diet. A related study shows Holstein-Friesian dairy steers may become an even more important source of beef. The dairy steers produced acceptable carcasses and gained as well, if not better, in the feedlot than steers of a popular beef breed. (27)

No longer need you guess how much fat is in a package of ground meat. A Ground Meat Analyzer developed by ARS instantly reads the fat content. Commercial models are being developed, and one firm is field-testing a unit. These units will replace the "eyeball" test for the fat content of ground meat. (28)

ARS helps make sure the food on your table is wholesome. Synthetic food additives have long prevented spoilage, but the safety of some chemicals is under close scrutiny. Replacements may have to be found for some. ARS studies indicate that frankfurters, bacon, and other cured meat products might be kept safe from nitrosamines if chemical compounds related to vitamin C were used in curing. In ARS tests with animals, nitrosamines have produced tumors, and they may be harmful to man, although this has not been proven. As a result, the use of vitamin C or a closely related substance in the cure process is under commercial evaluation to learn whether their use will increase the safety of curing meat products. (29)

Cottonseed promises protein for your table as a

result of a new process already in commercial use. Run through a new ARS process, each 100 tons of cottonseed yields about 25,000 pounds of high-quality edible flour containing about 65 percent protein. The flour successfully enriches wheat flour with protein. (30)

ARS chemists also have added proteins isolated from cottage cheese whey to carbonated and noncarbonated beverages. This could result in nutritionally fortified snack beverages. (31)

How adequate is your diet? A simple slide-rule device called a "Nutrimeter" plus an explanatory publication, developed and prepared by the ARS, helps you measure the nutritive value of food. With the "Nutrimeter," you read food labels and the table in *Nutrition Labeling—Tools for its Use* to figure the nutritive food values. (32)

ARS scientists report what is believed to be the first research data ever to show that reducing the level of fat in an otherwise normal diet can reduce blood pressure. The data also indicates that the low-fat diet helps prevent blood clots. (33)

Because you want to know more about food composition, the ARS Consumer and Food Economics Institute offers nutrient data and cholesterol clues of raw, processed, and prepared food. This information is available to consumers. "Composition of Foods," an ARS publication, gives the nutrient contents of more than 2,500 food items and forms the nucleus of a data bank for the proposed National Data Center for Food Composition. Industry and government are cooperating in this venture. This begins a universal coding system for food consumption research, in dietary surveys, and in nutritional labeling. Dietitians, physicians, social workers, and consumers in general will use the data in the interest of better diets. (34)

Your child's school lunch probably will include some tasty new dishes, such as Chinese pie or peanut butter cake, as a result of ARS nutritional research. ARS contributes to the Nation's School Lunch Program, affecting millions of children, in three direct ways: Development and revision of the lunch pattern which sets a nutritional goal to provide approximately one-third of the nutrients and food energy a child needs in a day; recipe acceptability studies to increase student participation, food acceptability, and reduce plate waste; a continuing program of recipe development. (35)

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION SERVICE

Consumer Benefits:

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) boosts the efficient production of food with profits for the farmer and better buys for you. Farmers get their income from the market and not from Government payments. Hence, ASCS programs use less of your tax money, and the supply of crops farmers produce keeps the price of food in the supermarket lower than otherwise would be possible. (39)

America's high farm productivity creates more jobs for makers of farm machinery, fuels, pesticides, and fertilizers, enhancing the flow of money through the economy. High productivity also strengthens our currency at home and raises the value of the dollar abroad through exports. This allows you to buy the products you want from other countries at prices you can afford. Agricultural exchange establishes and maintains international understanding, cooperation, and good will. The supply of food and fiber supports lasting world peace through expanded world trade. (40)

Enough food on hand? ASCS helps farmers market their crops wisely and efficiently, thus keeping farming a going concern. ASCS programs modify the boom-bust cycles to assure a steady flow of food to your supermarket without extreme price fluctuations. (41)

ASCS monitors certain vital farm supplies in the production and smooth movement of crops to market. These include pesticides, fuel, fertilizers, bailing wire, and twine. This service helps farmers anticipate shortages and plan accordingly. (42)

A better environment can be yours as a result of land and water conservation. ASCS helps protect your community from floods, provide community water storage, keep farmland productive, and preserve wetlands in major migratory bird flyways. ASCS also encourages wise forest management and shares the cost of forests with private owners to help meet future timber needs and provide wildlife habitat. (43)

ASCS helps in such natural disasters as floods, tornadoes and droughts. These programs restore land to production and rebuild conservation structures. ASCS helps feed farm livestock and wildlife when food supplies are cut off or are seriously diminished by natural disasters. (44)

ASCS helps assure you of sufficient food in national emergencies through many links of the food chain—from estimating fertilizer and seed needs to raw grain movement and storage to livestock and crop production. (45)

You get improved cotton and woolen fabrics from ARS research. These are some of the developments:

- Durable-press apparel hold creases after many launderings and resists abrasion.
- Flame-resistant cotton goods retain their flame resistance after repeated washings.
- Cotton canvas for awnings, tents, and tarpaulins does not fade, stain, or rot from mildew.
- Stretch-cotton fabrics and yarns have greater tear strength, warmth, and wrinkle-resistance. (36)

Similar progress improves woolen fabrics. ARS scientists have crossbred sheep for longer wool fibers, sheared sheep with chemicals, and developed treatments to make woolen fabrics mothproof, shrinkproof, and flameproof. Another chemical gives wool fabrics comfortable two-way stretch. Durable press treatment for 100 percent wool garments is on the way. (37)

ARS scientists have improved leather. A new tanning process makes leather garments washable, helps them resist perspiration, acids, and alkalis. Hence, they are easier to keep clean and cost less to keep up. Softness and beauty survive the washings. (38)

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

Consumer Services:

You can buy meat from inspected slaughter plants knowing it is more wholesome as a result of the work of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Last year, Federal meat and poultry inspectors checked 4,000 meat plants, 750 poultry plants, and about 1,000 combination meat and poultry plants. The inspectors made sure the meat was handled under sanitary conditions and that only wholesome meat was put into trade. (46)

You can check the labeling on processed meats with the assurance APHIS is safeguarding the accuracy of the labeling and is overseeing the wholesomeness of the product. Last year, APHIS inspected 21 billion pounds of poultry meat processed into such products as canned chicken, chicken and turkey pot pies, and frozen dinners. They also inspected 2 billion pounds of imported meat and poultry products, examined 34 billion pounds of slaughtered livestock, 52 billion pounds of red meat products, and 11 billion pounds of slaughtered poultry. (47)

You can get information on how to keep meat and poultry products wholesome in your home through APHIS consumer education efforts. You can keep your family free of food poisoning dangers by learning about the proper care and handling of meat and poultry products. Nearly 6,000 AM and FM radio stations reached millions of Americans with 72 radio spots urging food safety practices or warning of food poisoning hazards last year. Seven hundred TV stations piped programs into people's living rooms and dens with eight different television spots explaining food safety practices. You also can read feature articles and publications on food safety. Two feature stories last year on the care of hamburgers and ham generated 1,600 column inches of newspaper space. (48)

Traveling? Wondering what you can and can't bring into the United States from foreign countries? Many meats, fruits, vegetables, plants, and animals, as well as plant and animal products, may be brought in only with special approval, cautions APHIS. These agricultural items can harbor foreign insects and diseases that can cause severe damage to U.S. crops, forests, gardens, and livestock. APHIS fights this threat to your food and fiber sources. Learn about the restrictions first and save time and money when you go through U.S. Customs. Write for the APHIS booklet, "Travelers' Tips," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. (49)

Consumer Benefits:

High quality meat, poultry and plant products, undamaged by insects and disease, come to you because APHIS border inspectors keep out pests from foreign countries. APHIS helps eradicate diseases and pests, wiping out such threats as foot-and-mouth disease in ruminants and swine, a virus infection that could reduce our meat, milk, and other animal product supplies by as much as 24 percent; exotic Newcastle disease in poultry, with fatalities nearing 100 percent in unvaccinated flocks and potentially costing \$230 million a year; vesicular exanthema, a swine disease that spread into 42 states within months; Mediterranean fruit flies, a serious pest of citrus—eradicated four times; the oriental fruit fly, a highly destructive pest of more than 125 kinds of fruits, vegetables, and other plants—eradicated each time it appeared during the past 15 years. Had pests and diseases not been eradicated, the cost of "living with" them would have showed up on your food bill. (50)

Of the food eaten by consumers last year, APHIS inspectors acted in your behalf to condemn 81 million head of poultry, 125 million pounds of poultry parts, 31 million pounds of processed poultry products, 300,000 meat animals, 6 million parts of meat animals and 42 million pounds of processed meat products. APHIS' "second line of defense"—the compliance officers—protected you against unfit meat by detaining 15 million pounds of meat and poultry in marketing channels. (51)

To protect your health, meat and poultry foods also are monitored to detect drug, pesticide, and chemical residues. (52)

APHIS enhances the humane treatment of animals—enforcing regulations requiring humane handling, housing, and transportation of dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and other animals used in research; warmblooded animals exhibited in zoos, circuses, carnivals and road shows; and animals handled by wholesale pet dealers. APHIS helps prevent cruel and inhumane treatment of horses to induce show ring gaits. APHIS sees to it that methods used in the slaughter of food animals are humane. (53)

COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH SERVICE

Consumer Benefits:

A higher quality of life for you and your family is the goal of 4,000 research projects of the Nation's land-grant universities, administered by the Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS). (54)

Cooperative efforts with the land-grant universities help bring you more nutritious food, better houses, more beautiful communities, better job opportunities, cleaner air, safer water, and more wholesome recreation areas. (55)

Your health is the prime concern of some CSRS programs. These help protect your food from dangerous residues, upgrade the safety of your living, working, and play areas, and help protect your animals and plants from disease and ravaging insects. (56)

Activities of the CSRS help make our complex world a better place to live. This happens through reduced pollution, more effective multi-use of forest lands, more fish in streams, lakes and ponds, better ornamental plants and turfs, and improved rural income and housing. (57)

Urban residents also benefit when CSRS efforts focus on rural people. Rural families live better and increase their contributions to the quality of life in suburbs, cities, and towns through expertise about the economic potentials of their land, improved housing, and studies of individual and family problems, and help in adjusting to rapid change. (58)

ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

Consumer Benefits:

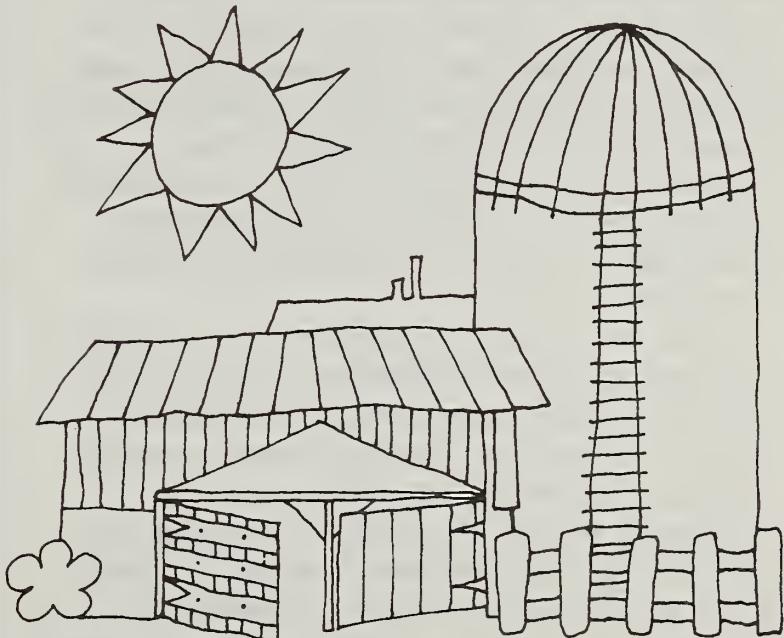
Know which food products are economical choices and you can better anticipate changes in food prices. The Economic Research Service (ERS) offers this information regularly. (59)

Do stories about food shortages cause you to buy supplies far beyond your current needs? ERS studies help separate fact from fiction so you can make realistic decisions. (60)

ERS provides facts about how much of your food dollar goes to the farmers, the middleman, and the retailer. This sharpens your awareness of where your dollar goes—how much for food itself and how much for services. (61)

Your opinion about different food and clothing products influences production and merchandising. ERS consumer surveys have brought improvements in permanent-press clothing, age dating on food products, and are helping bring better quality fresh tomatoes to your market. (62)

What do those dates mean on grocery items? Get the answers from ERS. (63)



EXTENSION SERVICE

Consumer Services:

Want to buy more with your dollars? Extension Service agents in your county can help you do it with a broad variety of tips and suggestions. The Extension Service is a cooperative arrangement between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State land-grant universities. The Extension Service agents are trained professionals. (64)

Your Extension Service (ES) is as near as your phone. It's listed under county and/or State government. Specialists answer your questions on nutrition, lawns, trees, landscaping, soil testing, pesticide use, gardening, and other subjects. (65)

Extension home economists answer questions on the care and maintenance of your home, food shopping, nutrition, clothing, home furnishings, appliances, financial management, family life, child development—or the selection, care, and use of consumer goods and services. (66)

Young people in your family? The Extension Service reaches seven million youngsters each year through 4-H work in agriculture, home economics, citizenship, and health. Just call your local Extension office about signing up for 4-H youth programs. (67)

Besides classes, workshops, correspondence courses, newsletters, publications, and other methods, you can get Extension information through radio, television, and newspapers. For example, an Extension home economist in one metropolitan area taped twenty-six 30-minute TV shows called "Dollar Decisions" to help consumers fight rising costs. More than 40,000 viewers saw the series on one Ohio station. Broadcasts in other areas reached thousands more. (68)

If you are a backyard gardener, or would like to purchase fruits and vegetables in quantity for canning or other preservation, the Extension Service can help you. Extension can help with publications, through your local clubs, by responding to your phone calls, or telling you which radio TV broadcasts to watch. In Texas, 8,000 consumers received food preservation information at one local office during a 1-month period. A telephone answering service in Wisconsin provides 123 audio tapes on canning and freezing 24 hours of every day of the week. You can get publications on safe food preservation in every State by contacting your local Extension office. (69)

Low-income families and youth can improve their nutritional knowledge, food preparation, and buying skills through Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Trained aides and volunteers do the teaching, mostly on an individual or small group basis. They've reached more than a million families and 1.7 million youths. (70)

Daily meal planning a chore? Your Extension office can help you plan meals and prepare food. (71)

You can get up-to-date facts on changing food supplies and prices, new food technology, merchandising practices, agriculture's role, and how the food system works, through Extension. Facts are designed to help you get more for your food dollar. They come to you from 3,000 local offices. (72)

Extension sharpens young people's consumer skills by giving them a better grasp of the economic system. About 50,000 4-H youths operate economic and business projects. In Ottawa County, Oklahoma, young people from low-income families participated in loans totaling \$79,700 under the Farmers Home Administration Youth Project Loan Program. All of the projects made money. (73)

Extension can help your family manage money better. In Mississippi, consumers learn wise use of credit, ways to manage family business, comparative shopping, the role of the consumer, insurance decisions, dollar stretching, and ways to cut the cost of living. All free. (74)

Concerned about energy conservation or simple home repairs? Extension offers publications on both subjects. More than one million publications have been distributed through Extension, Farmers Home Administration, Housing and Urban Development, and the Superintendent of Documents. (75)

Extension will help you learn how to protect your family from food poisoning. Last year, Extension reached more than 12 million people in 16 States on the subject of food safety through TV spots, publications, and other methods. (76)

Your family can participate in Extension health programs. In Florida, 7,000 women took part in a cancer detection program. More than 8,000 women participated in a similar health program in South Dakota. (77)

FARMER COOPERATIVE SERVICE

Consumer Benefits:

Many of the food products you buy are produced and processed by farmer-owned cooperative businesses. Farmer Cooperative Service, through research and direct management assistance, helps these cooperatives operate efficiently. As a result, you get more for your food dollar. (85)

Extension offers information on how to select, store, and use pesticides safely in and around your home. (78)

Does your community need action to solve problems? Extension acts as a coordinator to help people develop community goals, develop leadership, and evaluate community action. (79)

How about serving your community by becoming an Extension leader? Each year, Extension home economists train leaders for 35,000 or more community groups, which in turn reach about 600,000 homemakers and their families.

Thousands of these community leaders teach young people and help consumers. In King County, Washington, Extension horticulturists trained 115 volunteer "master" gardeners to answer questions for thousands of consumers. (80)

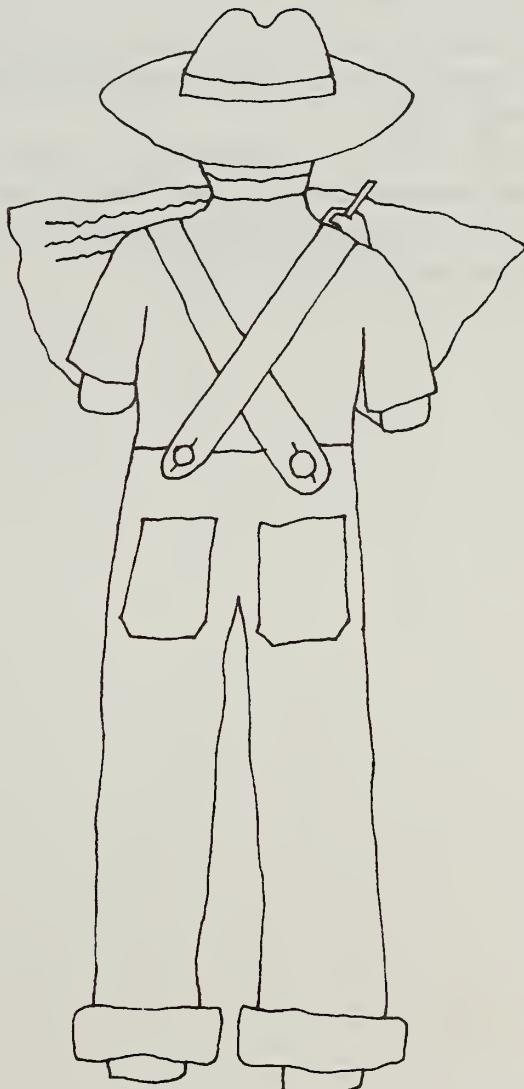
Want to help older people? In South Dakota, Extension organized senior citizen groups in each of the towns in one county. They created plans by which the county helps elderly people stay in their homes. (81)

Extension offers two kinds of health education programs. One deals with personal health. The other helps communities allocate health resources sensibly. In Pennsylvania, five Extension-sponsored classes led to certification of fruit growers or their employees for handling medical emergencies. (82)

Consumer Benefits:

New research methods and improved varieties developed in the laboratory or in an experimental plot boost food production when growers put them into practice. Extension State specialists and county Extension agents deliver new technology on food production to the farmer and housewife. More adequate food supplies mean lower relative food costs, higher quality food due to control of insect and plant diseases, and the release of manpower from agriculture to build industry. (83)

Consumers benefit from many programs not directly related to crops. These include the pilot sanitation program Extension has been conducting with grocery retailers using research to improve food and fiber processing and programs dealing with transportation and pest management to improve the environment. (84)



FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION

Consumer Services:

If you are young, a member of a supervised group, and want to start a business, you may get help through the youth loans program of the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA). (86)

An FmHA loan can help you and your neighbors build a nursing home, hospital, clinic, an emergency rescue facility, or other medical unit. Or, you and your neighbors may wish to obtain pure water service or build sanitary sewage facilities, a library building, a community center, or better public recreation facilities. Go to your local FmHA office for financial help. (87)

You can encourage the creation of jobs in your community through FmHA loans for business and industry and industrial parks. (88)

If your income is low or moderate, FmHA can help with the appropriate housing loan in the country or in a town of up to 10,000 people—even some towns up to 20,000. FmHA can help you buy your own new home, or it can help you fix an existing house. (89)

Do the elderly of your community need better housing? See your FmHA supervisor about a rental housing loan. (90)

FmHA will help your community or small watershed improvement project finance its share of recreation, drainage, flood protection, or other water conservation projects. (91)

FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION

Consumer Benefits:

Federal Crop Insurance Corporation's "All Risk" crop insurance enables individual farmers to better withstand the financial disasters crop losses can cause. This helps them continue producing food, assuring you of a steady supply. Premium dollars paid in by other insured growers—not from your tax dollars—pay all unavoidable insured crop losses. (92)



FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

Consumer Services:

If your income is low, the Food Stamp Program can help improve your family's diet with more food of greater variety. After being certified, you pay a sum of money based on your family's size and net monthly income and then receive food stamps of a larger value than the amount you paid. You can spend the stamps like money at authorized food stores. (93)

Your children are able to eat more nutritious meals at school as a result of the National School Lunch Program. And because of government subsidies, the meals cost you less. If you have a low income, your children can receive these school lunches free or at a reduced price. In one school year, over 25 million students participated in the National School Lunch Program. Ten million of these received free or reduced-price meals. (94)

Breakfast also is available in some schools.

Needy children receive the meal free. (95)

When "school's out" and children leave for the summer months, youngsters in some low-income areas get free and nutritious meals through the Summer Food Program. (96)

The Child Care Program provides food for needy children in day care centers all year round. (97)

Finally, if you live where there's a Federal-State Special Milk Program, your children can get milk at a reduced cost in schools, child-care centers, summer camps, and settlement houses, as well as similar nonprofit institutions providing child care and training. (98)

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

Consumer Services:

Information for classroom assignments, speeches, and other purposes about agriculture around the globe, international trade, and the kind of food aid the United States makes available to the world is yours for the asking. Just contact the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). (99)

If your small business product might interest customers in other parts of the world, the FAS computer system can help you match exporters and overseas customers. FAS also can help market-test and exhibit your U.S. product overseas. (100)

FOREST SERVICE

Consumer Services:

You may wish to visit forests, mountains, waterways, and seacoasts. The Forest Service helps keep these outdoor wonders for you until you're ready. Last year, the national forests hosted 193 million days of relaxation and entertainment for people. Campgrounds and picnic sites served up to 530,000 persons at one time. For the more rugged outdoor individual, the National Forest System maintains most of the National Wilderness areas—85 areas totaling 11.5 million acres. (101)

More than 200 winter sports sites serve you on National Forest lands. They make up almost 80 percent of the West's developed ski areas. (102)

Want to hike, fish, hunt, or backpack? Awaiting you are 95,000 miles of trails, 80,000 miles of streams and rivers, and 206,000 miles of Forest Service roads. (103)

You can find 50 percent of the Nation's big game, and hundreds of non-game species roaming the 187 million acres of forests and grasslands. (104).

Would you like to help protect and improve our National Forest lands? Foresters encourage you with environmental workshops. Get involved. Learn forest ecology. You may help improve the environmental awareness and understanding of others. (105)

Consumer Benefits:

Much of the lumber for new and remodeled housing comes from National Forests. Our National Forests provide a fifth of the nearly 63 billion board feet of timber harvested annually. Consumers use more than 1,000 items from forests. (106)

To help keep these timber-derived products in adequate supply, a healthy, fast-growing timber stand is required. Forest Service research specialists are developing genetically superior trees through carefully controlled cross-breeding of parent trees chosen for straight grain, rapid growth, and optimum resistance to insects and diseases. Grown in massive numbers, these "super trees" will increase supplies needed to meet America's timber demands at reasonable prices. (107)

Operating through State forestry agencies, the Forestry Incentives Program helps private forest owners improve tree plantings and timber stands. (108)

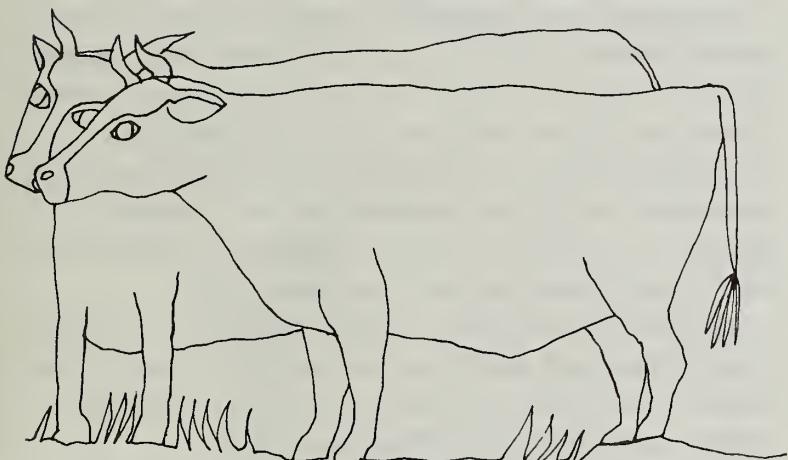
Forest Service cooperative foresters and researchers team up to devise new ways to make fuller use of each harvested tree. Chips, culled limbs—even bark and sawdust—are put to work for stronger construction lumber and plywood. (109)

Forests, large and small, fill our society's needs for pure air, water, livestock range, game habitat and esthetic scenery, as well as needs for products and jobs. (110)

PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

Consumer Benefits:

Fair, competitive marketing improves efficiency and cuts the costs of getting food from the farm to your table. The Packers and Stockyards Administration (P&SA) prohibits false and deceptive advertising and labeling and the use of bait and switch tactics in meat sales. P&SA helps prevent commercial bribery and price discrimination, for which you otherwise would pay in higher meat prices. (111)



RURAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Consumer Services:

Say you and your neighbors desire to improve your community's quality of living. Where can you get information? The Rural Development Service (RDS) will help. RDS maintains a library of aid available from Federal agencies, publishes fact sheets on new Government programs concerning rural development, and issues a guide to Federal programs for rural development. In one year, RDS helped nearly 1,000 communities with their community development projects and responded to some 2,000 requests for information. (112)

Consumer Benefits:

If you live in a small community, your leaders may get training sponsored by RDS in cooperation with local and State officials. Community officials and other leaders attend leadership schools held across the Nation. These people are better able to lead efforts to improve the well-being of rural residents. RDS also helps get other Federal agencies to deliver better service in such areas as housing, health, recreation, community facilities, and business and industrial development. (113)

Examples of RDS assistance to people include helping groups identify sources of financial and technical assistance so they can obtain community centers, fire departments, fire equipment, nursing homes, sewer systems, rural housing, urban beautification (gardening), road maintenance equipment, repaving streets, development of water reservoirs, recreation facilities, and farm fish ponds. (114)

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

Consumer Benefits:

If you move to rural America, build a second home, or establish a business there, the chances are good you will use the electric and/or telephone system financed through the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). (115)

In the outdoors, you may camp or ski with facilities operating on electricity supplied by REA-financed rural electric systems. (116)

When you call long distance from or to a rural area, the vital links in transporting your voice may be REA-financed units. (117)

Interstate highway lighting and roadside telephone booths for emergencies help make rural traveling pleasant. These services often are supplied by REA-financed electric or telephone systems. (118)

Need help in planning electrical usage on a farm or in your rural home? An REA-financed electric cooperative nearby probably provides a power use advisor to help you. (119)

How well should your farm home or weekend country home be insulated? Your nearby electric cooperative offers free expert advice. (120)

REA-financed rural electric and telephone systems serve people in 2,700 of the Nation's 3,100 counties. If you move to a rural community, you may find one of these systems nearby ready to help you. (121)

REA-financed rural electric and telephone systems have helped create more than 500,000 new jobs in rural America in the past 13 years. These are the achievements of local people, assisted by REA loans. (122)

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Consumer Services:

Before you build or buy a home, ask whether the site floods. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) can give you information about flood plains and flood hazards. (123)

What about high water tables that might cause septic tanks to fail or pollute underground water supplies? The SCS can tell you whether this is a problem. (124)

Homes built on soils that shrink more than usual are more likely to develop cracks in walls, foundations, and floors. Then you'll have costlier upkeep, water in basements, collapse of walls, easier access by termites, and other problems. The SCS offers information on soil types and their characteristics. (125)

How about soil erosion on steep slopes? You can learn how to stop washouts and how to hold soil in place from SCS. (126)

You and your neighbors in an area served by a small stream can form a small watershed program. The SCS helps plan small water projects, small dams, and other features to help prevent flooding, manage water, and develop recreation areas. SCS provides technical assistance in locating the watershed area and helps establish proper ground cover and conservation practices. (127)

Maybe you can save school tax dollars. To do so, see that school sites are evaluated by the SCS for potentially costly trouble from undesirable soil, water, and other land features. (128)

Your local SCS office can help your school's outdoor natural resource classroom inspire your children with a keen desire to conserve renewable resources. (129)

Get tips on safe hunting and fishing at your SCS office. SCS improvements in pond design and small watersheds increase chances of good hunting and fishing—and protect rare and endangered species of fish and wildlife. SCS helps improve leisure time facilities such as shooting preserves, campgrounds, water sports areas, vacation farms, and fishing lakes. (130)

If you are an absentee farm landowner, the SCS will help you prepare a conservation plan. (131)

STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE

Consumer Services:

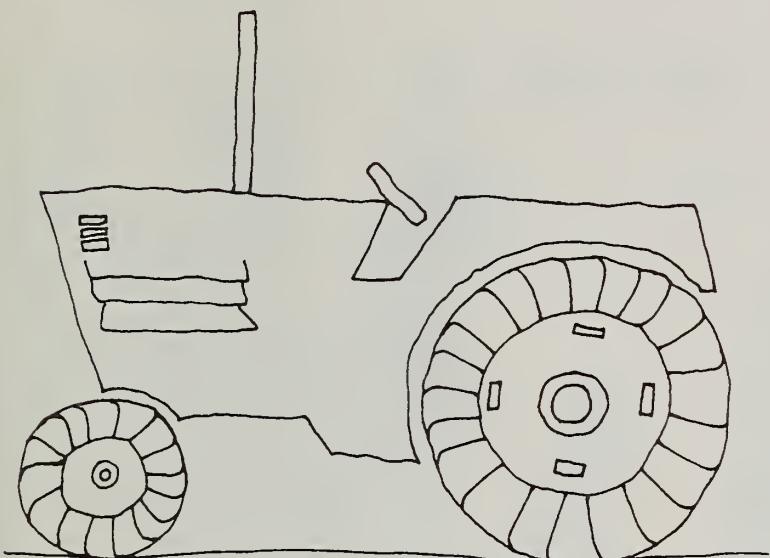
You can learn the expected size of the Nation's crops and how many livestock are being fed for market and poultry on farms from the Statistical Reporting Service (SRS). People who sell food products use these facts, and they show you how farm production influences supermarket prices. (132)

Consumer Benefits:

Food products come to you more efficiently because SRS issues unbiased facts on output and supplies to farmers, processors, and marketers. Five hundred of these reports come from Washington, D.C. each year. Thousands more are released through 44 state offices. They tell about crops, livestock, poultry, dairy products, commodities in cold storage, and grain stocks. It all helps buyers and sellers keep products flowing to you. (133)

GUIDE TO CONSUMER SERVICES AND BENEFITS OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGENCIES

SUBJECT	AGENCY	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
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SUBJECT	AGENCY	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS	SUBJECT	AGENCY	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
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	ES65, 66, 75			ES65, 66, 80, 84	
	FmHA89, 90			FCIC92	
	FS106, 107, 109			FAS100	
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	RDS113, 114			FNS93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98	
	SCS123, 124, 125			RDS112, 113	
Leisure Time &				REA115, 116, 117, 118,	
Recreation....	ASCS43			119, 120, 121	
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				80	
				FAS99	
				FmHA86	
				FNS94, 95, 96, 97, 98	
				SCS128, 129	



